

REMARKS

Applicant has read and considered the Office Action dated February 9, 2007. With this Amendment, claims 1-3 and 5 have been amended, claims 4 and 6-13 have been canceled, and new claims 14-20 have been added. All new claims and claim amendments are fully supported by the specification and drawings. No new matter is added. Claims 1-3, 5, and 14-20 are pending in this application. In light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests advancement of this application to allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, claims 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. With this Amendment, claims 9 and 11 have been canceled. In addition, new claims 14-20 are clear and definite. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

In the Office Action, claims 1-7 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed toward non-statutory subject matter. With this Amendment, claims 1-3 and 5 have been amended and claims 4, 6-7, and 11-13 have been canceled. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 1 recites a consulting system which provides a consulting service of a specific field to a user across a network. The consulting system includes a database system and a service component. The database system includes a plurality of problem objects and a plurality of unit objects. Thus, it can be seen that claim 1 recites multiple physical components. Therefore, claim 1 fits within the definition of a "machine" as defined in 35 U.S.C. § 101.

The USPTO's Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility, published November 22, 2005 states:

a claimed invention may be a combination of devices that appear to be directed to a machine and one or more steps of the functions performed by the machine. Such instances of mixed attributes, although potentially confusing as to which category of

patentable subject matter it belongs in, does not affect the analysis to be performed by the examiner. Note that an apparatus claim with process steps is not classified as a "hybrid" claim; instead, it is simply an apparatus claim including functional limitations.

Furthermore, the Guidelines also state that "[t]he subject matter courts have found to be outside of, or exceptions to, the four statutory categories of invention is limited to abstract ideas, laws of nature and natural phenomena." Claim 1 does not fit within any of these limited exceptions, but does fit within the definition of a machine. Furthermore, claims 2-3 and 5 ultimately depend from claim 1 and are also directed to the system. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3 and 5 is respectfully requested.

New claim 14 recites a computer readable medium containing computer executable instructions which when executed by a computer perform a method of providing consulting services of a specific field to a user. Claim 14 then recites a series of method elements. Claim 14 is now in the form of a Beauregard claim, and is directed toward statutory subject matter. Claims 15-17 ultimately depend from claim 14 and are also in proper form.

In addition, new claim 18 recites a method of providing consulting services including a series of method elements. Claim 18 is therefore directed toward statutory subject matter. Claims 19-20 ultimately depend from claim 18 and are in proper form. Therefore, new claims 14-20 are allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 101, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Eder patent application (U.S. Patent Application 2001/0034628). With this Amendment, claims 1-3 and 5 have been amended, claims 4 and 6-13 are canceled, and new claims 14-20 are added. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The Eder patent application discloses a method and system for evaluating the probable impact of user-specified or system generated changes in business value drivers on the components of value, revenue, expense and capital change, of a commercial enterprise. At least

one of the purposes of the method and system is to overcome the limitations in valuing intangible assets of a commercial enterprise. (See, e.g., abstract and paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 13, and 24.)

In FIG. 1, the Edar patent illustrates an automated system 100 for business valuation. The system includes database 50 and application software 200,300,400,500,600,700,800,900. FIG. 3 illustrates the preferred embodiment of computer system 100, which includes client personal computer 110, application server 120, and database-server personal computer 130. The application server 120 stores information concerning revenue, expenses, capital, etc. extracted from a several databases 10,15,30,35, and 40, shown in FIG. 1. The application server 120 processes the information and outputs a financial management report. (See, e.g., paragraphs 47-53.)

Claim 1 generally recites a consulting system comprising a database system and a service component. The database system comprises a plurality of problem objects and a plurality of unit objects. Each of the plurality of problem objects has an identifier, an execution condition, questions which will be given to the user, and answers which will be selected by the user as properties of the problem objects. Each of the plurality of unit objects has an answer script for reflecting a result of a series of processes and including at least one of the plurality of problem objects. The plurality of unit objects include a first unit object, wherein rules between the objects are defined depending on corresponding properties of the objects. The service component providing an interface screen and for supplying personalized final answers to the user by performing the answer script if the user answers the questions supplied by the rules. The service component executes the plurality of problem objects in a sequence according to the identifiers of the problem objects which have been inputted as a property of the first unit object, and wherein the execution condition determines whether the problem object is executed or not.

New claims 14 and 18 generally recite a system or method of providing consulting services of a specific field to a user. The method comprises defining rules between a plurality of objects depending on corresponding properties of the objects, the plurality of objects including a plurality of problem objects and a plurality of unit objects; storing the plurality of problem objects in a database system; storing the plurality of unit objects in the database system, executing the plurality of problem objects in a sequence according to the identifiers of the

problem objects; and providing an interface screen. The plurality of problem objects each have an identifier, an execution condition, questions which will be given to the user, and answers which will be selected by the user as properties of the problem objects. The plurality of unit objects includes at least one of the plurality of problem objects. The plurality of unit objects also include a first unit object.

The Eder patent application fails to disclose various features recited in claims 1, 14, and 18. For example, the Eder patent application does not disclose a plurality of unit objects that include at least one of the plurality of problem objects, the plurality of problem objects including an identifier, an execution condition, questions which will be given to the user, and answers which will be selected by the user as properties of the problem objects. Moreover, the Eder patent application also fails to disclose executing the plurality of problem objects in a sequence according to the identifiers of the problem objects which have been inputted as a property of the first unit object.

In light of the foregoing, claims 1, 14, and 18 are in condition for allowance. In addition, claims 2-3 and 5 ultimately depend from claim 1, claims 15-17 ultimately depend from claim 14, and claims 19-20 ultimately depend from claim 18. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-3, 5, and 14-20 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. There may be additional reasons that the pending subject matter is patentably distinct from the cited references in addition to those discussed herein. Applicant reserves the right to raise any such arguments in the future. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



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